**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**
Washington, DC 20460

OFFICE OF
AIR AND
RADIATION

Mr. Mike Brown
Carlsbad Field Office
Department of Energy
PO Box 2090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

Dear Mr. Brown:

The Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Department of Energy's (DOE) June 23, 2021 Planned Change Notice (PCN) and accompanying attachment on plans to excavate five new main access drifts located to the west of the currently mined area of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). In the Agency's review of the June 23 PCN, EPA has found that the graphic in the attachment did not include any panel closures.

EPA requested further information on this in an email from Jay Santillan to Anderson Ward on August 26, 2021. DOE responded with an updated schematic that diagrams the areas where existing and future panel closures will be in the updated repository. However, this updated graphic does not include the original panel closures near the waste shaft in the north of the repository and does not appear to describe panel closures between the West Mains Access Drifts and existing repository. Please clarify whether this omission was an oversight or if DOE has determined to exclude panel closures near the waste shaft. Additionally, please clarify if DOE has plans to include panel closures in the West Mains Access Drifts.

If you have any questions, please contact Jay Santillan at Santillan.Eugenio-Felipe@epa.gov or (202) 343-9343.

Sincerely,

DANIEL
SCHULTHEISZ

Digitally signed by DANIEL SCHULTHEISZ
Date: 2021.08.31 14:57:27 -04'00'

Tom Peake
Director
Center for Waste Management and Regulations
Radiation Protection Division

cc: Mark Bollinger, CBFO

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